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## AUG. 15 TAX DEADLINE NEARS FOR MORE THAN 8 MILLION EXTENSION FILERS

WASHINGTON – Most taxpayers already have filed their tax year 2001 federal income tax returns. But for more than 8 million taxpayers who opted for the automatic extension of time to file, the deadline is August 15.

The Internal Revenue Service reminds taxpayers with extensions to file their returns by August 15 to avoid the late filing penalty, which is 5 percent per month of the unpaid tax. Help may be available, however, for people who cannot file by August 15.

Taxpayers with special circumstances, such as a hardship, that prevent them from preparing and filing their tax forms by August 15 may request an additional two-month extension that will give them until October 15 to file. These taxpayers will be granted an extension of time to file even if they cannot send in payment of outstanding 2001 taxes with the extension request.

Taxpayers granted the additional time to file will not be penalized for late payment of tax if they pay the balance of their 2001 tax when they file the tax return by October 15 and if 90 percent of their total tax was paid by April 15.

To request the additional time to file, taxpayers must file Form 2688 with the IRS by August 15. Form 2688 is available on the IRS Web site at *www.irs.gov*. The IRS will advise filers in writing whether or not their requests are granted. Form 2688 can be filed electronically or mailed to the IRS.

Taxpayers may file their return electronically until October 15. Taxpayers can use tax preparation software on their own computers or file electronically through an authorized efile provider. Both options offer taxpayers security and accuracy in filing their returns as well as faster refunds.

Last year more than 2.5 million taxpayers requested additional time to file, up almost 200,000 from the prior year.